

**Summary of JCCRER Scientific, Administrative, and Outreach Meetings  
February 9-12, 1997**

*Key outcomes of the JCCRER meetings included:*

- \* the JCCRER co-chairs' joint signing of a Statement of Intent reaffirming Russian and American commitment to support the JCCRER studies as those studies transition from feasibility to long-term;
- \* an agreement to move ahead with Project 1.1 (dosimetry population studies) and to concurrently conduct a new 1-year study (Project 1.3 - still untitled) to learn more about source term determination;
- \* better understanding, on the part of the Russians, of the microfilming process, and DOE plan to go to MAYAK and begin the microfilming effort in late May 1997;
- \* EPA's commitment to contribute about \$500,000 in funding during FY 1997 to the projects (probably to be focused on projects 1.3 and 2.4 (dosimetry worker studies);
- \* the intent that ISTC would be used as the mechanism for transferring funds for the DOE microfilming project and considered as a potential mechanism for transferring funds for other JCCRER projects in the future;
- \* a commitment that project arrangements outlining expectations, reporting requirements, milestones and deliverables, and funding levels and mechanisms, would be signed between DOE and IBRAE, FIB-1, MAYAK, and URCRM, respectively, with the goal of jointly signing all arrangements and transferring funds within the next month;
- \* an invitation to Vice Minister Khetagurov and his staff to visit DOE sites that have been successful in public involvement and a commitment to work with Russian EC members and institutes to move forward with public involvement; and
- \* a plan to hold a joint Russian-American SRG meeting in Chelyabinsk next year.

*Common themes during the February 9-12, 1997 meetings included:*

- \* *the need for better communication among all parties* - EH-63 will prepare a communications plan/thinkpiece by February 28, 1997 for review by EH management and EC members.
- \* *the concern about availability of funding for the projects* - EPA has committed to fund at least \$500,000 this fiscal year, probably to be focused on projects 1.3 and 2.4. NASA has also demonstrated an interest contributing funds to JCCRER projects. With these contributions, all projects should be adequately funded for FY 1997.

*Below are short summaries of the JCCRER meetings held last week. More detailed minutes of each meeting are available upon request.*

**Russian - American Joint Scientific Review Group(SRG) Meeting (February 9, 1997, 7:30 - 10:30 p.m.):**

- o This was the first joint Russian-American SRG meeting.
- o Russian and American SRG members agreed upon the merit of recently approved proposals and discussed a number of issues related to the projects, including:
  - the role of SRG members;
  - mechanisms for future exchange of information between the Russian and American SRGs;
  - the importance of good translations;
  - the need for better communication between the principal investigators and the SRGs; and
  - the need to meet again next year in Chelyabinsk.

**Issues Resolution Meeting: "Dose Reconstruction Methodology for Population Studies Under JCCRER Program (Project 1.1)" (February 10, 1997, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.):**

- o Participants agreed that:
  - Project 1.1 should move ahead;
  - a new, concurrent dosimetry study, to be referred to as Project 1.3, would be conducted by the MAYAK Production Association over the next year, with the goal of learning more about source term determination;
  - an American principal investigator for Project 1.3 would be named within the next several weeks; and
  - the proposal for Project 1.3 would be submitted by March.
- o Other issues under discussion included:
  - the necessity to establish teeth banks (and banks for blood and tumor tissues, as suggested by Dr. Withers);
  - the upgrade of the whole body counter; and
  - the need for improved communications among all project participants.

**Discussions with Vice Minister Khetagurov, EMERCOM (Morning of February 11, 1997):**

- o DOE representatives (Paul Seligman, Frank Hawkins, and Libby White) met with Vice Minister Khetagurov for breakfast at the Willard Hotel and escorted him to a 10:00 a.m. meeting with Peter Brush, as well as a meeting later that morning with Kay Goss of FEMA.

- o Of particular interest to Vice Minister Khetagurov, as expressed during the meeting with Peter, was public involvement/risk communications.
  - Peter invited Vice Minister Khetagurov and his staff to visit DOE sites that have been successful in public involvement, and
  - Mohandas Bhat of EH-63 has begun working with Dr. Annissimova of EMERCOM to set up a visit and to move forward on JCCRER-related public involvement activities.

**Trip to the Archives and Discussion of Microfilming Project** (*Morning of February 11, 1997*):

- o DOE representatives (Elly Melamed, Cindy Shindledecker, and Neil Barss) and contractors who will be providing microfilming services in Russia took a group of Russians to the archives facility in College Park, Maryland, to explain the process of preservation and storage of paper records and the archival microfilming program.
- o Elly and Cindy also discussed with Russian participants the visit later this spring to MAYAK.

**Outreach Meeting** (*February 11, 1997, 1:30 - 6:00 p.m.*):

- o DOE hosted an outreach meeting and reception designed to educate the public, scientific organizations, and congressional members on radiation health effects research being performed under the JCCRER.
- o Vice Minister Khetagurov and Dr. O'Toole gave introductions and signed a Statement of Intent reaffirming Russian and American commitment to support the JCCRER studies as those studies transition from feasibility to long-term.
- o The Russian Executive Committee members each spoke briefly, followed by presentations by the Russian principal investigators for each project.
- o Among the attendees was Elliot Marshall of *Science*, who plans to include an article on the studies in the next issue.

**Executive Committee (EC) Meeting** (*February 12, 1997, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.*):

- o American and Russian EC members met to determine the status of action items from the October 1996 meeting, to review and determine the course of action concerning issues discussed during the February 9-11, 1997 meetings, and to discuss the agenda for the April 24-26, 1997 meeting.
- o Included among discussions were:
  - that videoconferencing be considered as a potential method of communication

between American and Russian EC members, institutes, and scientists. Frank Hawkins committed that DOE would look into the cost and mechanisms of procuring such equipment.

- funding for the projects, including the likelihood that EPA (Jerry Puskin, new EC member and E. Romona Travato, new JCCRER member) would fund Projects 1.3 and 2.4. Frank committed to work with EPA as it makes its funding decisions.
- the viability using the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) as a mechanism for transferring funds. Frank committed to look into ISTC and to share information with Russian and American EC members.

**Joint Dosimetry/Epidemiology Meeting for Direction 2 (Project 2.4) (February 12, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.):**

- o Participants recommended:
  - frequent communications, through meetings of the Direction 2 Russian and American principal investigators, as a means of ensuring their needs are met; and
  - more information from DOE and the Russian EC members on the JCCRER structure and processes.

**DOE Funding to Russians (February 10 - 12, 1997 - informal meetings):**

- o DOE representatives (Frank Hawkins and Libby White) met with Russian EC members and representatives from the institutes to discuss funding levels, distribution, and mechanisms for FY 1997.
- o Russian and DOE participants agreed that:
  - at least 60 percent of all DOE funds transferred to the Russian institutes in support of DOE-funded JCCRER projects in FY 1997 would be used for science (salaries of scientists, equipment, travel);
  - project arrangements outlining expectations, reporting requirements, milestones and deliverables, and funding levels and mechanisms, would be signed between DOE and IBRAE, FIB-1, MAYAK, and URCRM, respectively, with the goal of jointly signing all arrangements and transferring funds within the next month; and
  - the ISTC would be considered as a viable mechanism to transfer funds in the future.
- o Elly Melamed, EH-63, and EH-71 are working to put in place a general agreement with the ISTC that will lay the groundwork for using the ISTC as the mechanism for funding the microfilming project, scheduled to begin in late May 1997. The

agreement and related documents will be general enough to cover all JCCRER projects, so as to give DOE and other funding agencies the option of using ISTC for other projects in the future.